

If Nader's goal were actually progressive reform—a ban on soft money, a higher minimum wage, health-care coverage for some of the uninsured, a global warming treaty—it would be possible to say that his strategy was breathtakingly stupid. But Nader's goal is not progressive reform; it's a transformation in human consciousness. His Green Party will not flourish under Democratic presidents who lull the country into a sense of complacency by making things moderately better. If it is to thrive, it needs villainous, right-wing Republicans who will make things worse. Like Pat Buchanan, Nader understands that his movement thrives on misery. But the comparison is actually unfair to Buchanan (words I never thought I'd write) because Buchanan doesn't work to create more misery for the sake of making his movement grow the way Nader does. From a strictly self-interested point of view, Nader's stance is the more rational one.

So Gore supporters might as well quit warning the Green candidate that he's going to put George W. Bush in the White House. Ralph Nader is a very intelligent man who knows exactly what he's doing. And they only seem to be encouraging him.

Mr. Speaker, this article lays out, I think, the basic premise by which this Congress failed to deal with the Patients' Bill of Rights, education, prescription medicines for senior citizens.

In talking about the Ralph Nader campaign, it said that Mr. Nader has made it perfectly clear what his strategy was. It is the strategy of Lenin; that is, to "heighten the contradictions." That is in quotes.

Now, the whole idea of bringing down the political process to make things better out of the ashes is one that has been very actively pushed by Mr. Nader in his campaign. He said it very directly in many places. He said, "We are hoping that we will destroy the Democratic Party, and that from that will rise a new party on the left."

This House and its failure to deal with these major issues today and in this session are a direct result of a strategy very similar announced by Speaker Gingrich. His idea, when he was in the minority, was to destroy the House; to do everything possible to discredit the government, to discredit the House of Representatives, to bring it into ill repute with everybody in the public.

Now we come to this session. He started it 6 years ago. He tried it for 2 years. He lost seats in the next election. He tried it again. He lost seats in the next election. And the third time they tried it, they lost seats in the next election.

Now, what we have got here is a situation where the Congress simply did not function. All that lovey-dovey kissy-face that was going on a few minutes ago is basically to obscure the fact that, although the Republican leadership said, "We will pass the budget and all its parts by a timely date the first of October," but in fact, we stand here today, 1 month after the new fiscal year is in, and we have not passed three major bills. The Senate and House Republicans could not get their act together and get it down to the President.

They say, well, the President was not going to sign it. They never could get an agreement among themselves to send the bill down to the President and veto it if he chose. They sent some down, which he vetoed. But if they cannot decide among themselves, maybe they should go down and sit down with the President and negotiate and get the people's business done.

They could not do it. They could not bring themselves to. Having created these contradictions and all the fighting in here, they could not then sit down with the President and negotiate how to deal with tax relief for the middle class, how to deal with educational financing for schools. They could not deal with the Patients' Bill of Rights. They could not deal with prescription drugs for senior citizens.

I do not know how any State is going to plan their budget when they have no budget from the United States government. They are just sort of sitting out there waiting.

There are hospitals. The BBA giveaways, that is, the restoration of the unfortunate cuts that were made in Medicare, which have put hospitals all over this country in serious problems, have not been done.

We are going into an election with a hospital in every one of the 435 districts represented in this House where they do not know how much money they are going to have any money to make up for the deficits they are running now.

This comes from this idea that somehow they can radically rip this government up and start over new. It is a fallacious idea that Mr. Nader is using, and it was a fallacious idea that Mr. Gingrich used in this House.

We must come back here and work together in the future, or this country will suffer immensely.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

TRIBUTE TO JIM AND BETTY MCCANN ON THEIR RETIREMENTS FROM THE NEW BRUNSWICK DISTRICT OFFICE OF THE HONORABLE FRANK J. PALLONE, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to pay tribute today to two of my longest serving and most loyal staffers, Jim and Betty McCann, who retired this year from my New Brunswick district office.

Mr. Speaker, it is not unusual to have an outstanding individual on your staff for a long time, but to have two

outstanding individuals who also happen to be married to each other is most unusual and most fortunate for me.

Jim and Betty McCann worked for my predecessor, the late Congressman James Howard, in the 1980s. Jim Howard recognized early on that Jim and Betty had the talent and the personalities to handle the varied and difficult job of running a congressional district office.

Just as we know that not everyone has the special skills needed to be a successful politician, so, too, not everyone has the versatility and interpersonal and organizational skills to survive and excel on a congressional staff.

After Jim Howard passed away and I was elected in 1988, I urged Betty and Jim to stay on and work for me. When redistricting reshaped the districts in New Jersey and I ran and won in the Sixth Congressional District, I set up a new office in New Brunswick, New Jersey, in the Middlesex County portion of my district.

Jim and Betty's experience on congressional and case work matters were very important to the success of my new office, which handled a tremendous amount of constituent casework and important projects in the most populous and ethnically diverse area of my district.

In all those years, I did not think I ever heard a word of complaint about the operation of the New Brunswick District Office. I knew it was being well administered, so I could divert my attention to other important issues in Middlesex County, secure in the knowledge that the equally important constituent matters were being carefully attended to.

I was often complimented in person and in letters about Jim and Betty's service to the Sixth District, and I would like to quote from some of the hundreds of letters that I have received thanking me, or thanking me for their efforts, over the years.

The first, Mr. Speaker, is from a physician in my district. He writes:

"Dear Congressman Pallone:

I am writing this letter to thank you and your outstanding office staff for the great effort in dealing with my difficult case. Mrs. McCann has been very helpful, sincere, and had the leading role in solving my complicated case.

Over the past few months, I have been dealing with Mrs. McCann, and she has always been very cooperative and always walks the extra mile to get things done properly. I was very impressed by her knowledge of the immigration laws and rules and her superior ability to approach a difficult case like mine. . . . She is a superb caseworker."

I have another letter from a retired lieutenant colonel regarding Jim McCann. It says, "Dear Congressman Pallone, I am writing to thank you and a member of your staff, Jim McCann, for responding so quickly and effectively to my family in time of need.

My wife's brother recently died after a long illness. He was a retired Navy